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COMMUNITY

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Congressman Bob Filner stands up for California vets

Congressman Bob Filner recently announced his support for a comprehensive package of benefits offered by the Democratic Members of the House of Representatives, designed to honor the contributions of those who have served America in the Armed Forces—the Democratic “Salute to Veterans and the Armed Forces Act of 2003.”

“We salute our veterans by proposing a plan to ensure that the system established to compensate and honor them for their service is

strengthened so that it remains the best in the world,” said Rep. Filner.

The Democratic legislative package, introduced as H.R. 2569 by Congressman Chet Edwards of Texas with heavy input by Congressman Filner, concentrates on issues of vital importance to current service members and to veterans and military retirees.

- Removes the offset between military retired pay and VA compensation benefits - and provides what is known as “concurrent receipt.”

- Ends the two-tiered system of the Military Survivor Benefits Program (SBP) for the spouses and families of military retirees and those who died in the line of duty, so that beneficiaries receive 55% of the military retired pay, as they were promised, instead of current practice that reduces the benefits to 35% after age 62.

- Includes funding to reduce waiting times for veterans medical care.

- Opposes enrollment fees for veterans joining the VA health care

system - and opposes increases that have been proposed by the Administration for prescription drug co-payments for veterans.

- Expands educational opportunities for Reservists.

- Speeds up the adjudication of disability claims for veterans.

- Provides a \$1,000 bonus to the nearly 500,000 troops who served in imminent danger in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“I will continue to help the 2,318,000 veterans in California by fighting for a system where a veteran can get a medical appointment, have a disability claim processed, receive disability pay and survivor benefits,” said Congressman Filner.